



Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance and Inclusion Month

Lesson Plans

3rd-5th Grade



Shema Yisrael: Listen up!

Recommended for 3rd-5th Grade

Big Ideas

- People communicate in different ways
- People who can't talk can communicate
- Moses had trouble talking, but he was still the leader
- Everybody needs to listen
- We work together to listen to each other

Objectives

- Students will identify different ways that people communicate
- Students will be familiar with how Moses responded at the burning bush
- Students will be familiar with how Moses communicated and how Aaron helped him
- Students will understand the difference between not talking and not having anything to say

Materials

- Copies of handouts "Moses at the Burning Bush" and "Ways We Communicate"
- Something to write and draw with and on

Accessibility Considerations

- If you have students who are blind, make sure the images in "Ways We Communicate" are described to them.
- Make sure that students have writing/drawing materials that will work for them. For some students, this may mean an iPad or an electronic copy.



- Make sure that students have the text in a form they can read (e.g.: If a student needs large print, make them a large print copy, if they need it on their iPad or other device, make sure you share the file with them.)
- In conversations about disability, it is very important not to use the word ‘retarded’, and to correct students if they use that word. It is very hurtful (and in conversations about disability and communication, kids sometimes use it because they don’t know any better).
- Be careful with ‘we’, and ‘they’. For instance, don’t say, “We may take talking for granted, but it’s really hard for people with disabilities.” Instead, say something like, “Talking is really hard for some people with disabilities”. When you say “we”, include people with disabilities.
- If you have students with communication-related disabilities:
 - Give them time to process so that they can respond.
 - Be aware that the emotional stakes of this conversation are likely higher for them than most other students.
 - Pay attention to the “emotional temperature” of the room and whether or not these students are comfortable.
 - Don’t talk about your students with communication disabilities like they’re not there. Don’t let any of their peers do that either.

ACTIVITIES

Activity #1: Script - Moses at the Burning Bush

The script has three roles: Moses, God, and Narrator. You can either read the script at the front of the room with student volunteers, or break the students up into small groups to read it together.

Review Questions:

1. Who was the leader: Aaron or Moses? (the right answer here is Moses.)
2. What did Moses say he couldn’t do? (some version of “talk to Pharaoh”; “talk to the Israelites”; “talk”; “speak well”)
3. Who told Aaron what to say? (Moses)
4. What did Moses do? (told Aaron what to say, listened to God, turned his walking stick into a snake, made his hand scaly)
5. What did Aaron do? (speak to the people and Pharaoh; follow Moses’ instructions)



Discussion Questions:

How did Moses communicate?

1. Why did Moses think he couldn't talk to Pharaoh? (They will probably say some version of "because he was shy", and some of them may be familiar with a story that says Moses stuttered or that he had trouble talking because he ate a hot coal as a child. Make sure they consider the possibility that he literally had trouble talking and that it wasn't just shyness.)
2. How did God communicate with Moses? (Making the burning bush, telling him what to do, miracles)
3. How did Moses communicate with God? (Stopping to look at the burning bush, words, turning his face away, following directions)
4. How did Moses communicate with Pharaoh and the people? (Performing the miracles, telling Aaron what to say)
5. How did Moses communicate with Aaron? Why could Aaron understand him? (There are a lot of possibilities here. Make sure one of them is 'Aaron took the time to listen').

What's the problem with talking?

1. Why else might talking not work well for someone? (Kids will come up with different answers. Make sure one of the answers they consider is 'some people can't talk')
2. How else can people communicate?

Activity #2: How do people communicate?

Distribute Handout #2: "Ways We Communicate". Explain that the handout is a list of examples and facilitate a "Think/Pair/Share":

Think: Ask students to circle the things you can do without talking.

Pair: Ask students to discuss with a partner which things they circled and why (they will likely not all agree on everything).

Share: Ask students to share. (It may be worth pointing out that you can tell stories without talking and that you can ask questions without talking and that some people who can't talk can sing. It may also be worth explaining the difference between sign language and just gesturing)

Activity #3:

Give students a writing and drawing prompt: "Moses communicated by...." or "One way people communicate is..."



HANDOUT 1: Moses and God at the Burning Bush

Narrator: Moses saw that a bush was on fire, but it was not burning up. He stopped to look at it.

Moses: Why isn't this bush burning up?

Narrator: God saw that Moses had stopped to look, and said:

God: Do not come closer. Take off your shoes, because the place you are standing on is holy ground. I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

Narrator: Moses looked away, because he was afraid to look at God.

God: I have heard the cries of the Israelites, and I have come to rescue them. Tell Pharaoh to let my people go!

Moses: Who am I that I should tell Pharaoh to let us go?

God: I will be with you, that will be your sign that I sent you.

Moses: When I tell the Israelites that God sent me to rescue them, they will ask what your name is. What should I tell them?

God: I Am What I Am. Tell them: God, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob has sent me. Tell them: God will take you out of Egypt.

Moses: What if they do not believe me?

God: What is that in your hand?

Moses: A walking stick.

God: Throw it on the ground.

Narrator: Moses threw the walking stick on the ground, and it turned into a snake!

God: Pick it up by the tail.

Narrator: Moses picked up the snake by the tail, and it turned back into a walking-stick.

God: If you show them this miracle, they will believe you. Now, put your hand in your shirt.

Narrator: Moses put his hand in his shirt. When he took it out, it was covered in snowy scales!



God: Put your hand back in your shirt.

Narrator: When Moses took his hand out of his shirt, the scales were gone!

God: If they don't believe the first miracle, they will believe the second. If they don't believe that either, take water from the Nile and pour it on the ground. It will turn into blood.

Moses: I have never been a man of words. I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.

God: Who gives a person speech? Who makes someone mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, God? Now go, and I will be with you and tell you what to say.

Moses: Please send someone else.

God: Your brother Aaron is coming to meet you. He speaks well. Tell him what to say, and he will speak for you to the people. Take this walking stick to perform the miracles.



HANDOUT 2: Review Questions (if choosing to do this as writing activity rather than out loud)

1. Who was the leader: Aaron or Moses?

2. What did Moses say he couldn't do?

3. Who told Aaron what to say?

4. What did Moses do?

5. What did Aaron do?

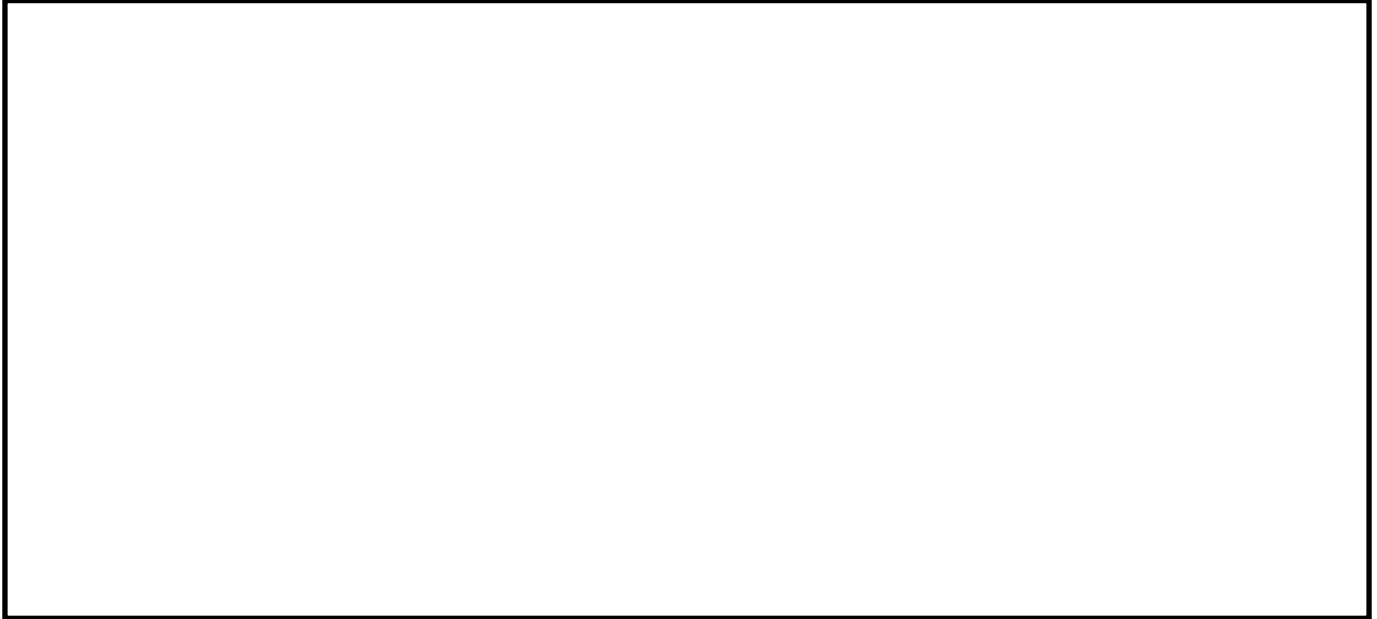
Ways we communicate



Name _____

People communicate in different ways.

One way that Moses communicated was _____



Another way that people communicate is _____

